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AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL
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МЕЖДУНАРОДНАЯ АМНИСТИЯ
منظمة العفو الدولية
國際特赦組織

URGENT ACTION

EXTERNAL **AI Index: ASA 21/58/95**

UA 263/95 **Arbitrary detention / Fear of torture** **23 November 1995**

EAST TIMOR **At least 20 unnamed East Timorese**

A group of East Timorese, believed to include four women and nine children, detained as they were attempting to leave East Timor to seek asylum in Australia, are feared to be at risk of torture and ill-treatment in detention. The group have been reported as carrying East Timorese independence flags, an act which could increase the risk of ill-treatment.

At least 20 and maybe as many as 27 people, whose identities remain unknown, were arrested by security forces after being spotted by a naval boat near Viqueque on the night of 20 November 1995. They were reportedly attempting to travel by boat to northern Australia to seek asylum.

After being questioned by local military authorities in Viqueque, they are believed to have been transferred to the East Timorese capital, Dili, in a military vehicle. It is not known whether they are now being detained in military or police custody. East Timorese Police chief, Andreas Sugianto was reported on 22 November as confirming that the group had been arrested.

Amnesty International is concerned that the group appear to have been arbitrarily detained, apparently because they were attempting to leave East Timor and seek asylum.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

East Timorese suspected of opposing Indonesian rule are frequently subjected to torture and arbitrary detention. Since September, over 200 people have been arbitrarily detained after rioting broke out in Dili and other towns, most of whom were released without charge. Most of the detainees were released without charge, but many claimed to have been tortured or beaten while in detention.

In recent months, greater numbers of East Timorese have sought asylum mainly by entering foreign embassies in Jakarta. Another group of 18 is seeking asylum in Australia after travelling from East Timor by boat. The group claim to have suffered torture and political imprisonment in East Timor.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Please telephone or send telegrams/express/airmail letters in Bahasa Indonesia or English or your own language:
- urging the authorities to clarify the whereabouts and identities of those detained;
- urging the authorities to release the group unless they are to be charged with a recognisably criminal offence;
- seeking assurances that they are not being subjected to any form of torture or ill-treatment in detention;
- seeking assurances that they have full access to lawyers of their own choice and to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

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APPEALS TO:

MILITARY COMMANDER REGION IX/UDAYANA
(covers Bali, Lombok, Nusa Tenggara and
East Timor)
Maj Gen H A Rivai
Pangdam IX/Udayana
Markas Besar KODAM IX/Udayana
Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Telephone: +62 361 228 095
Telegrams: Pangdam IX/Udayana, Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia
Salutation: Dear Major-General

COPIES TO:

SECRETARY GENERAL, NATIONAL COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Prof. Dr. Baharuddin Lopa
Sekretaris Jenderal, Komisi Nasional Hak Azasi Manusia (KOMNAS HAM)
Jl. Pemuda No. 104
Arawamangun
Jakarta Timur, Indonesia

and to diplomatic representatives of East Timor accredited to your country.

PLEASE SEND APPEALS IMMEDIATELY. Check with the International Secretariat, or your section office, if sending appeals after 7 January 1995.